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to these, we have done quite enough, and imagine we are better than we really are; but it is a vain and presumptuous idea that conforming now and then to a few external forms, will atone for the errors of our lives. In vain we proclaim fasts and appoint days of thanksgiving. They will not be accepted at our hands, so long as they remain unaccompanied by the fruits of genuine religion, which consists not in specious appearances, formal professions, or fond reliances on creeds and ceremonies, but in the dedication of the heart, practically devoted to the ceasing from evil and learning to do well.

Though many are loud in this profession of godliness and pompously assume the appearance of sanctity, the tone and the temper of their lives evidently manifest the insincerity of their hearts. They betray the cause they pretend to take in hand to support, and barter for a few selfish considerations the part they should take in promoting the great and common cause of equity and justice.

How can we reconcile our high professions of religion, and loud demonstrations of joy in favour of peace with the limited views we are taught to entertain of the nature and magnitude of those great principles of justice, mercy, and truth, which should in every particular form the rule for our conduct. These last I fear, constitute but a small part of the code of morality with many who perhaps are loudest in their praise. With many too, to whom from their calling we are led to look up as consistent examples of those amiable and essential qualities, unbiased by the dread of censure, or hope of preferment.*

* I appeal to the fact that in the small town where I live, four clergymen of the

With some, nay with a numerous class these times of rejoicing and thanksgiving are only seasons of hypocrisy and dissimulation. They would rather war should continue. It is to them a gainful trade. They embrace the opportunity it frequently offers of entering the field of speculation and indulge largely in this hazardous course, the probable success of which principally depends on the continuance of war. They therefore dread a change taking place lest it might prove a severe and deadly crush to their splendid and speculative hopes of emolument. War also affords employment to the sons of many of our gentry who vainly and idly suppose that a military calling is more honourable than that of a merchant, a farmer, or a tradesman. With these different classes of the community it cannot be supposed that demonstrations of joy, or giving of thanks on the present occasion can be attended with any degree of sincerity. I think they would rather rejoice at the prospect of war. However this may be the case, the real friends of peace do indeed rejoice that a termination is at length put to the late cruel and bloody conflict, but still they have much to regret, and in many instances very little cause of rejoicing.

N.S.

For the Monthly Belfast Magazine.

A FEW WORDS ON THE SUBJECT OF
THE SLAVE TRADE; ADDRESSED
TO THE WOMEN OF IRELAND.

church of England, refused lately to sign a petition in favour of the abolition of the African slave-trade. Is this doing as they would be done by? Or is it a proof of the increasing justice, and growing liberality of the times?

[July.]

My COUNTRYWOMEN,

WE cannot doubt that as mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives, you possess some influence over the mind of man. To each other you are sometimes unjust; but to him you seldom fail in any point of duty or affection, except he grievously provoke the failure by unkindness, or sap the foundation of your morality by weak indulgence or depraved example. You also possess a peculiar influence, founded on the strictness of your morals and the unequalled delicacy of your manners; each refined and improved by that enlarged system of education which has fitted you to be companions to the most enlightened, and by the frequent recurrence of that retirement to your own groves and gardens, which encourages in your minds the expansion of thought and virtue. Many amongst you are acknowledged by men of the most distinguished worth as the highest prize they have drawn in the lottery of life—"Heaven's last best gift,"—like the key-stone of the arch, rendering all the rest fair, firm, and complete.

As daughters, in what circle can we look around without seeing some affectionate young woman soothing with gentle cheerfulness the hours of decrepitude and disease, perhaps of peevishness and remorse; enlivening the couch of languor by her smiles, her sweetness, and her song; pointing, like the angel of hope, to that future world, and those rays of mercy, from the contemplation of which the sufferer might shrink in sullen despondency if invited by another hand. Are there not many who to fulfil this duty have rejected the hand of an approved lover? Content to brood over those deep-rooted recollections that blossom in the heart of woman (their favourite soil) through long successive years.

There never was a moment when, as Christians, (the only point of view where you are placed on an equality with man) you were more imperiously called upon to exert your influence, and not to bury this precious talent given you for the wisest purposes.

The first additional article in the treaty concluded between this country and France, authorizes the latter to carry on the slave trade for five years, unfettered by a single regulation that could tend to mitigate its atrocity. This dreadful sentence has been pronounced at a moment when Providence has showered such blessings on us, that a flagrant violation of its laws appears an act of the most presumptuous ingratitude. What a fountain of bitterness has arisen among the flowers of peace! what a poisoned drop has fallen into the chalice of victory!

Lord Castlereagh declares that he found it impossible to obtain peace without immolating these unoffending victims. Let us then enable him to say to France, "The British nation will not consent to this sacrifice. The people will not purchase with the blood of Africa that peace which they have earned with their own; with some of the purest, and some of the noblest blood that flowed in British veins." Where the voice of the nation is unanimous, it must prevail. In such a virtuous case, it becomes the organ of a presiding Providence. Let it be your business, my countrywomen, to render it unanimous. Inform yourselves on this subject; read Clarkson; fix in your minds that the slave trade is not a barter of men already slaves, or their offspring, but a continual renewal and increase by fraud and force, of a class, who, contrary to the laws of nature, constantly diminish in numbers, from being

compelled to labour beyond their strength, ill fed, ill clothed, and treated generally with the most barbarous, and often with the most refined cruelty.

Imagine your own children torn from you by pirates for such a deplorable existence, or accused upon slender grounds of faults they had or had not committed, and condemned to this punishment. How would all you have suffered, if it has been your lot to have wept over the bed of death, sink in the comparison! Remember this is the fate to which every mother of an imported slave is devoted. Inform yourselves of the horrors of the sea voyage by which they pass from liberty to slavery, although your imagination must recoil at such a scene of bodily and mental torture. My pen refuses to trace particulars. Perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps I should dwell on the crowded and noisome spot, scarcely differing from a coffin, but in the number it encloses, where five feet six inches in length, and sixteen inches in breadth, has been the usual space allowed to each. Perhaps I should mention that the temptation to commit suicide, even by the lingering pains of hunger, are rendered so strong by miseries there endured, that peculiar instruments have been fabricated, some to punish such attempts by torture, others to force food upon those who firmly refuse it: that many have been chained during the whole voyage, many suffocated, and that others have been thrown alive into the sea, when it chanced accidentally to promote an avaricious purpose, are authenticated facts.

Destructive as this traffic is to the Africans, it is not less so to the seamen employed. It appears morally and physically to corrupt the air they breathe. It is twisted and en-

tangled with robbery and murder, in every stage of its progress. It is a hotbed fermenting the seeds of every vice. The mortality it introduces amongst the seamen is excessive; and the habits of brutal cruelty, indulged in by the captains, spread into crimes of unparalleled atrocity.

From the ardor of enterprizing benevolence you are restrained by your sex; but the wide field of mercy is open to your exertions; and where can you reap such a harvest as in the path I have presumed to point out? One of the brightest luminaries of the age, (Mr. Pitt) stigmatized the slave trade as the greatest practical evil that existed, and declared, that "there was never any instance of so much human misery being condensed in so small a space; and the last hours of his admired and beloved competitor, Mr. Fox, were soothed by the hope that this hydra had received its mortal wound. When you find these great men, who differed so widely on other political subjects, united in this, and almost in this alone, let none deceive you by calling it a party question: it is the party of humanity against cruelty, of manly firmness against timid policy, arrayed in the borrowed garb of expediency. Be it yours to assist in proving that nothing is expedient in the eyes of Britons, but what is humane, great, and magnanimous.

I feel that your exertions in this "holy cause" will meet their reward. If they fail to serve others, to you at least they will prove a blessing; since every effort to prevent or diminish human misery, is recorded in characters that will survive when states and empires are swept away.

AN ABOLITIONIST.